

# Worksession

<b>Agenda Item #</b>	8
<b>Meeting Date</b>	July 2, 2007
<b>Prepared By</b>	Jessie Carpenter City Clerk
<b>Approved By</b>	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager

<b>Discussion Item</b>	Council Compensation Committee Report
<b>Background</b>	<p>On March 26, 2007, the Council appointed eight residents to serve on the 2007 Council Compensation Committee. The Committee was asked to review the salaries of the Mayor and Council and to make a recommendation by July 2, 2007, as to whether the salaries should be adjusted. Any change to the salaries must be adopted by a two reading ordinance of the Council, with the salary adjustment taking effect for the Council term beginning in November 2007. Currently, members of the City Council receive \$6,000 annually; the Mayor's annual salary is \$8,000.</p> <p>The Committee has made a number of recommendations, which are included in the attached report. They have recommended a salary adjustment as follows:</p> <p>November 2007: Mayor \$10,000; Council Members \$7,500 (To bring compensation in line after 4 years of no raises)</p> <p>November 2008: Mayor \$11,000; Council Members \$8,250</p> <p>November 2009: Mayor \$12,100; Council Member \$9,075</p> <p>November 2010: Mayor \$13,310; Council Member \$9,982.50</p> <p>Members of the Council Compensation Committee will be present at the worksession to discuss their recommendations.</p>
<b>Policy</b>	<p>Takoma Park Code, Title 2, Section 2.04.110 sets out a process for periodic review of Council compensation:</p> <p><b><i>2.04.110 Periodic review of council compensation.</i></b></p> <p><i>A. Council Compensation Committee. The Council shall appoint a committee of City residents, every 4 years beginning with calendar year 2007, to serve as the Council Compensation Committee. The Committee shall review the salaries of the Mayor and Councilmembers and make recommendations to the Council whether or not such salaries should be changed.</i></p> <p><i>B. Principles of Compensation. The Council Compensation Committee shall apply the following principles to guide its recommendations:</i></p> <p><i>1. The positions of Mayor and Councilmember are part-time and should be treated</i></p>

	<p><i>that way;</i></p> <p><i>2. Full monetary compensation for the Mayor and Councilmembers is not appropriate;</i></p> <p><i>3. It is appropriate to monetarily compensate the Mayor and Councilmembers to some extent for their work;</i></p> <p><i>4. Monetary compensation creates an obligation for the Mayor and Councilmembers to perform their jobs;</i></p> <p><i>5. Monetary compensation provides status to the Mayor and Councilmembers;</i></p> <p><i>6. The Mayor's salary should be greater than that of Councilmembers; and</i></p> <p><i>7. Compensation for the Mayor and Councilmembers should be comparable to Maryland municipalities of similar size and complexity.</i></p> <p><i>C. Effective Date of Council Salary Adjustment. Any change in the salary paid to the Mayor and Councilmembers is adopted prior to the next municipal election and takes effect only as to the next succeeding Mayor and Councilmembers as prescribed in Sections 302(c) and 304(c) of the Municipal Charter. (Ord. 2004-3 (part), 2004)</i></p>
<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	The fiscal impact will depend on the Council's decision.
<b>Attachments</b>	Report and Recommendations of the 2007 Council Compensation Committee
<b>Recommendation</b>	Review the report and discuss the findings with members of the Committee.

# Recommendations of the 2007 Council Compensation Committee

*Tebabu Assefa*  
*Alicia Powers*  
*Diane Robinson-Berkley*  
*Steve Shapiro*  
*Sean Tipton*  
*Roberta Valente*  
*John Verdi*  
*Deborah Zuckerman*

July 2, 2007

Takoma Park Code, Title 2, Section 2.04.110 sets out a process for periodic review of Council compensation:

***2.04.110 Periodic review of council compensation.***

*A. Council Compensation Committee. The Council shall appoint a committee of City residents, every 4 years beginning with calendar year 2007, to serve as the Council Compensation Committee. The Committee shall review the salaries of the Mayor and Councilmembers and make recommendations to the Council whether or not such salaries should be changed.*

*B. Principles of Compensation. The Council Compensation Committee shall apply the following principles to guide its recommendations:*

- 1. The positions of Mayor and Councilmember are part-time and should be treated that way;*
- 2. Full monetary compensation for the Mayor and Councilmembers is not appropriate;*
- 3. It is appropriate to monetarily compensate the Mayor and Councilmembers to some extent for their work;*
- 4. Monetary compensation creates an obligation for the Mayor and Councilmembers to perform their jobs;*
- 5. Monetary compensation provides status to the Mayor and Councilmembers;*
- 6. The Mayor's salary should be greater than that of Councilmembers; and*
- 7. Compensation for the Mayor and Councilmembers should be comparable to Maryland municipalities of similar size and complexity.*

*C. Effective Date of Council Salary Adjustment. Any change in the salary paid to the Mayor and Councilmembers is adopted prior to the next municipal election and takes effect only as to the next succeeding Mayor and Councilmembers as prescribed in Sections 302(c) and 304(c) of the Municipal Charter. (Ord. 2004-3 (part), 2004)*

Effective with the Council elected in 2003, the annual salary of the Mayor is \$8,000. Councilmembers receive an annual salary of \$6,000.

On March 26, 2007, the Council appointed eight residents to serve on the 2007 Council Compensation Committee. (Resolution 2007-4, attached.) The Committee was asked to review the salaries of the Mayor and Council and to make a recommendation by July 2, 2007, as to whether the salaries should be adjusted. Any change to the salaries must be adopted by a two reading ordinance of the Council, with the salary adjustment taking effect for the Council term beginning in November 2007.

The group met six times in April, May and June. Over the three months, the Committee:

- Reviewed the 2003 Council Compensation Committee report and recommendations;
- Reviewed the City Charter and Code related to powers and duties of the Mayor and Council and periodic review of council compensation;
- Reviewed recent compensation survey data from other Maryland municipalities with a particular focus on comparable cities;
- Surveyed residents on their opinions about compensation;
- Surveyed the City Council and Mayor;
- Conducted in-person interviews of the Mayor and four members of the City Council.

The resident survey was published in the Takoma Park newsletter and was available on the City website. Residents were able to submit responses electronically. A link to the survey was sent to city community associations. Copies of the survey were available for pick up at the Community Center front desk.

The number of survey responses was low. There is no way to gauge how representative the survey results are of the city as a whole. Approximately 65 surveys were submitted by the June 7<sup>th</sup> deadline. The Committee reviewed the surveys and a tally of the results. The survey report is attached.

***Notes on the Council Compensation Committee's work***

1. The Committee elected not to choose a chair or other leader. The group worked by consensus up until the final vote on salary increases for 2008 through 2010.
2. The CCC learned much about the formal and actual duties of the Mayor and members of the Council. Most of Council Members' time is spent attending meetings and providing constituent service. The time devoted to constituent service varies significantly among the wards.
3. The resident survey revealed little understanding – and much misunderstanding – of how much time the mayor and council members spend on their duties. The CCC recommends that the Council undertake efforts to educate the public in this regard.
4. Compensation for the mayor and the council serves as nominal recognition for service rather than as salary for the hours worked. These salaries in Takoma Park are commensurate with those of similar cities in Maryland. Council members indicated that compensation is generally a significant factor in considering whether to run for office, but is not an overriding factor.
3. The committee recognizes that the survey results are not representative of the City as a whole due to the low response rate. However, the survey provided residents an opportunity to voice their opinions concerning this topic.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The City Council should explore changes to the current availability of health insurance to City Council Members to make it more affordable for the Members who find the current costs onerous.

2. The Compensation Committee recommends an increase in salary for the Mayor and City Council Members.

Waiting four years to review the salary is too long. Gradual raises make sense. Council Members and Mayor should not have to wait four years for each increase.

By vote of 4 to 1, the Compensation Committee recommends a raise effective in November 2007 and then a 10% increase per year as follows:

November 2007: Mayor \$10,000; Council Members \$7,500  
(To bring compensation in line after 4 years of no raises)

November 2008: Mayor \$11,000; Council Members \$8,250

November 2009: Mayor \$12,100; Council Member \$9,075

November 2010: Mayor \$13,310; Council Member \$9,982.50

Note: One Committee member recommends that, following the salary increase in November 2007 to \$10,000 and \$7,500, the raises should then be 5%, rather than 10% each year for the following three years.

3. The Compensation Committee recognizes that Council and Mayor compensation may not be sufficient to allow some lower-income residents to afford to serve in these offices. The CCC recommends that the Council explore this issue further, with the goal of facilitating greater diversity among candidates for Mayor and Council

4. The Council should continue to fund members' attendance at conferences where attendance benefits the City. The CCC recommends funding of professional development courses in appropriate areas.

5. The Council and Mayor recently budgeted funds to allow for the purchase and annual contract cost for Personal Digital Assistance (PDAs) or other means of constituent communications. The CCC recommends that the Council track what effect, if any, the use of this equipment has on the amount of time spent on City business (e.g., increased constituent work, decreased time through efficiency). This could be a factor for assessing Council compensation in the future.

## List of Attachments

- Resolution 2007-4 Establishing the 2007 Council Compensation Committee
- Results of Resident Survey
- Results of Mayor and Council Member Survey

Introduced by: Councilmember Clay

**Resolution 2007-4**  
**Appointing the 2007 Council Compensation Committee**

WHEREAS, *Takoma Park Code*, Title 2, Section 2.04.110, provides for the City Council to appoint a committee of City residents every four years, beginning with calendar year 2007, to serve as the Council Compensation Committee; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Committee is to review the salaries of the Mayor and Councilmembers and make recommendations to the Council whether or not such salaries should be changed; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.04.110(B) of the Code directs that the Council Compensation Committee shall apply the following principles to guide its recommendations:

1. The positions of Mayor and Councilmember are part-time and should be treated that way;
2. Full monetary compensation for the Mayor and Councilmembers is not appropriate;
3. It is appropriate to monetarily compensate the Mayor and Councilmembers to some extent for their work;
4. Monetary compensation creates an obligation for the Mayor and Councilmembers to perform their jobs;
5. Monetary compensation provides status to the Mayor and Councilmembers;
6. The Mayor's salary should be greater than that of Councilmembers; and
7. Compensation for the Mayor and Councilmembers should be comparable to Maryland municipalities of similar size and complexity; and

WHEREAS, any change in the salary paid to the Mayor and Councilmembers shall be adopted prior to the next municipal election and shall take effect only as to the next succeeding Mayor and Councilmembers as prescribed in Sections 302(c) and 304(c) of the City Charter; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has interviewed a number of applicants and has found them to be qualified to serve on the Committee.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND THAT the following individuals are hereby appointed to serve on the 2007 Council Compensation Committee:

1. Tebabu Assefa, 7777 Maple Avenue, #201
2. Diane L. Robinson-Berkley, 7620 Maple Avenue, #318



3. Steve Shapiro, 7324 Willow Avenue
4. Roberta Valente, 7101 Poplar Avenue
5. Alicia Powers, 609 Hudson Avenue, #125
6. Sean Tipton, 34 Freemont Avenue
7. John Verdi, 6508 Allegheny Avenue
8. Deborah Zuckerman, 7100 Poplar Avenue

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Committee shall review the salaries of the Mayor and Councilmembers and provide a recommendation to the Council as to whether or not any adjustments should be made; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Committee shall conduct all their meetings in compliance with the Maryland Open Meetings Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Committee shall report to the Council with their recommendation no later than Monday, July 2, 2007.

Adopted this 26th day of March, 2007.

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter  
City Clerk

# City Council Compensation Survey

The following information is based on a total of 65 surveys submitted to the City Clerk's Office.

**Question 1:** Do you know the number of hours per week the Mayor and Councilmembers spend on their official duties?

83% - No

14% - Yes

3% - Did not answer

**Question 2:**

	1	2	3	4	5	*DK	**NA
a. The Mayor's salary is fair.	25%	15%	2%	14%	15%	20%	9%
b. The City Councilmembers' salaries are fair.	23%	17%	2%	12%	17%	20%	9%
c. The salary of the Mayor should be raised.	25%	6%	2%	12%	31%	15%	9%
d. The salaries of Councilmembers should be raised.	25%	6%	3%	14%	26%	17%	9%
e. Increasing the salary for the Mayor will increase the quality of candidates for Mayor.	29%	9%	12%	11%	14%	14%	11%
f. Increasing the salary for Mayor will increase diversity among candidates for Mayor.	28%	11%	11%	15%	6%	18%	11%
g. Increasing the salary for Councilmembers will increase the quality of candidates for Council.	29%	9%	6%	15%	12%	15%	12%
h. Increasing the salary for Councilmembers will increase diversity among candidates for Council.	26%	11%	9%	15%	8%	18%	12%
i. Increasing the salaries of the Mayor and Councilmembers would encourage people to run for the wrong reason.	28%	17%	9%	9%	11%	14%	12%
j. Increasing the salaries of the Mayor and Councilmembers will result in an improved City government.	26%	5%	17%	20%	9%	12%	11%

\*DK=Don't know

\*\*NA=Not Answered

**Question 3:** To decide fair salary for the Mayor and City Councilmembers, the following factors should be considered

- a. Comparisons with same/similar positions  
in other jurisdictions.....47%
- b. Workload and duties.....48%
- c. Time spent working on Mayor/Council business.....41%
- d. Inflation.....30%
- e. Cost of Living.....28%
- f. Mayor/Council-related business expenses.....27%

**Summary of Comments:**

Overall the participants of the survey stated that the Mayor and Councilmembers are voluntary community service positions. Some of the participants suggested basing the elected official's salaries on the current cost of living and others suggested basing it on other similar jurisdictions.

## Compensation Survey for Councilmembers and Mayor

The following information is based on the survey submitted to the City Clerk's Office.

**Question 1:** How much time **on average** do you spend each week on Mayor/Council business?

The overall average time the Council and Mayor spend on each per week:

- a. Attending official meetings..... 6 hours
- b. Speaking with city/council officials on the phone.....2 hours
- c. Speaking with constituents on the phone.....2 hours
- d. Meeting with constituents..... 3 hours
- e. Other..... 2 hours

**Question 2:** Has the number of hours, increased/decreased in the last year?

No – 50%  
Yes – 33%  
N/A – 2%

**Question 3:** Has the number of hours, increased/decreased in the last two years?

No – 50 %  
Yes – 33%  
N/A – 2%

**Question 4:** Do you anticipate the workload to increase/decrease in the near future (next 2-4 years)?

No – 50%  
Yes – 50%

**Question 5:** What is the average number of miles driven per week related to Mayor/Council business? \_\_\_\_\_mil./week

The overall average miles Council and Mayor drive per week related to Council/Mayor business: 12 miles per week

**Question 6:** How much do you spend on public transit while conducting Council business?

The overall amount spent on public transportation while conducting Council business: \$ 0.73 per week

**Question 7:** How much per month **on average** do you spend on [unreimbursed] expenses related to Council work (i.e. dinner meetings, cell phone costs, gas, etc.)?

The overall average of unreimbursed expenses spent per month on related Council business: \$107.00 per month

**Question 8:** Please list other kinds of compensation that might interest you (i.e. access to City health benefits, transportation benefits, use of Blackberry phones, etc.)?

The Council listed the following compensations below:

Health Benefit.....	33%
Blackberry.....	11%
PDA.....	11%
Website.....	11%
E-mail newsletter.....	11%
None.....	22%

**Question 9:** To decide fair compensation for elected officials, the following factors should be considered (check all that apply):

Comparisons with same/similar jobs	
in other jurisdictions.....	35%
Workload and duties.....	24%
Time spent working on Council business.....	24%
Ward.....	0%
Inflation.....	12%
Cost of living.....	6%
Other sources of income.....	0%

**Question 10:**

1

2

3

4

5

\*DK

a. Increasing the salary for the Mayor will increase the quality of candidates for Mayor.	33%	17%	0%	50%	0%	0%
b. Increasing the salary for Mayor will increase diversity among candidates for Mayor.	17%	17%	17%	50%	0%	0%
c. Increasing the salary for Councilmembers will increase the quality of candidates for City Council.	33%	17%	0%	50%	0%	0%
d. Increasing the salary for Councilmembers will increase diversity among candidates for City Council.	17%	17%	17%	50%	0%	0%
e. Increasing the salaries of the Mayor and Councilmembers would encourage people to run for the wrong reason.	33%	0%	17%	50%	0%	0%

\*DK= Don't Know